

Mang, and again in the turmoil that accompanied the end of the Later Han, quantities of books were destroyed—probably all told a very much more extensive loss than the "burning of the books" by Shih Huang Ti. The result is that works which now purport to have been handed down through and from the Han undoubtedly contain many mistakes and have suffered alterations.

As we have seen, histories were being written. Pan Piao, the father of Pan Ch'ao, began a continuation of Ssii-ma Ch'ien's great work. This was completed by his son, Pan Ku—who was also something of a philosopher—and by his gifted daughter, Pan Chao, and is known as the *Ch'ien Han Shu*, or Book of the Former Han. Pan Chao, it may be noted, was not only a historian, but a poetess, an essayist, and a novelist. Her advice to young women was to remain a model almost to our own day.

Among dictionaries the *Shuo Wen* was compiled (under the Later Han), and is still a source of information (although now largely superseded by archeological finds) for early Chinese forms. Many commentaries on the Chou literature were written embodying the views of the Han scholars, some of them at variance with the teachings of the original texts.

A new prose style was developed. It was simple and while not identical with the vernacular, in grammar and construction largely conformed to it. For its vigor and clarity it is even now admired and regarded as a model. Many scholars, however, tended to display their erudition by interlarding their pages with quotations from older books.

Poetry also flourished, although none of its authors attained the distinction of the greatest of their successors of later dynasties. Much of the verse of the Han was influenced by the

literary traditions of the state of Ch'u. These differed decidedly from the restrained classicism of the North and had a pronounced strain of romanticism, an exuberant vocabulary, and a rather wild fancifulness. Incidentally, the painting of the Han seems also to have been molded in part by Ch'u ideals. Chang Heng, the first Chinese painter of whom we know much, a contemporary of Wang Ch'ung, was as well an astronomer, a mathematician, and a poet,

Most of the preceding pages have concerned themselves with the achievements of the upper classes—the men and women of power and of education. One would like to know what the masses